

Assemblyman
PAUL KORETZ

Forty-second Assembly District

proudly representing the communities of West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, Century City, Westwood, Bel Air, Brentwood, West Los Angeles, Hollywood, Hancock Park, Universal City, Studio City, and Sherman Oaks



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Koretz Endorses Goldberg's Domestic Partner Rights & Responsibilities Act of 2003

(Sacramento) Assemblyman Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood), the author of last session's Civil Union legislation, today endorsed a bill introduced by Assemblymember Jackie Goldberg (D-Los Angeles) to expand California's Domestic Partnership law to include virtually all rights and responsibilities available to married couples. Koretz joined Ms. Goldberg and the other members of the LGBT Caucus, as well as representatives from leading gay and lesbian advocacy organizations at a press conference in the State Capitol to voice his support.

"Lesbian and gay families and their children desperately need the protections offered to married couples by our state's family law. We simply must choose the vehicle that achieves those protections as quickly as possible. That's why Assemblymember Goldberg and the LGBT Caucus have my full support as a joint author of The Domestic Partner Rights and Responsibilities Act of 2003," said Assemblyman Koretz.

According to the 2000 Census, Mr. Koretz's hometown of West Hollywood weighs in at nearly 20% of all couples being same-sex partners, ranking third in the nation behind the gay resort towns of Provincetown, MA and Guerneville, CA.

"It's no secret that the majority of people in my district, which includes West Hollywood, support civil marriage for gay and lesbian people. These couples are married in the eyes of their parents and siblings, in the eyes of their friends, in the eyes of their community, and in the eyes of their Assemblyman," said Koretz.

A long time advocate for gay and lesbian rights, Mr. Koretz authored a Civil Union bill last session (AB 1338) that died in the Assembly Judiciary Committee. Today he commented on his decision not to re-introduce a Civil Union bill at this time.

"Following the passage of Civil Union in Vermont, many of us were ready to embrace a new concept for lesbian and gay families that was, by definition, equal to marriage. Had Civil Union passed in California, the symbolic impact would have emboldened advocates across the country. I believe many political moderates in the Legislature sensed that potential impact and were uncomfortable with it. This expansion of domestic partnership does not have the same symbolic

power as Civil Union. I believe the Governor and many moderates in the Legislature can see the injustice endured by gay families and want to alleviate it, albeit in a quiet, less sweeping way. Californians overwhelmingly support equal treatment for gay and lesbian people and support legal recognition of their relationships. Domestic Partnership expansion is currently our best chance to gain the protections lesbian and gay families need most,” said Koretz.

In the press conference, Assemblymember Christine Kehoe (D-San Diego) announced the LGBT Caucus’s legislative priorities for the coming year. In addition to Ms. Goldberg’s omnibus Domestic Partner bill, Caucus priorities include: AB 17, a Kehoe bill requiring state contractors to provide benefits for domestic partners equal to those of married spouses; AB 196, a gender-based nondiscrimination bill authored by Mark Leno (D-San Francisco); and a soon-to-be-reintroduced foster care bill by Judy Chu (D-Monterey Park). Koretz offered his full support for the LGBT Caucus priorities.

“I am honored to be a joint author or co-author of all the priority bills identified by the LGBT Caucus. Christine Kehoe’s Equal Benefits legislation brings employee benefits to thousands of domestic partners. Mark Leno’s Gender-Based Nondiscrimination bill protects transgender people from employment and housing discrimination, and Judy Chu’s Foster Care bill ensures gay kids are not maltreated in our foster care system. The priority bills of the LGBT Caucus are about justice and equality for all people, and I will vigorously support their passage,” said Mr. Koretz.

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